



JONATHAN E. FIELDING, M.D., M.P.H.
Director and Health Officer

JONATHAN E. FREEDMAN
Chief Deputy Director

313 North Figueroa Street, Room 806
Los Angeles, California 90012
TEL (213) 240-8117 • FAX (213) 975-1273

www.publichealth.lacounty.gov



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February 23, 2010

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H. *JE Fielding*
Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **STATUS OF BLACK INFANT HEALTH PROGRAM**

This is to notify you of programmatic and financial changes to the Black Infant Health (BIH) Program. The Department of Public Health (DPH) currently contracts with five community-based agencies to provide BIH services to African American pregnant and parenting women with the goal to improve healthy outcomes and eliminate the disproportionate African American infant mortality rate throughout Los Angeles County. For fiscal year (FY) 2009-10, DPH received \$1,750,000 for the provision of countywide BIH services. This funding amount consists of the following sources: Title V (\$575,713), First 5 LA (\$816,058), and Title XIX federal matching funds (\$358,229).

The State's FY 2009-10 budget eliminated funding for the BIH Program in the State General Fund, a total of \$766,058. Without this funding, services would have to be discontinued for approximately 780 clients and four of the five contracted BIH agencies would have to be terminated in Los Angeles County.

On August 18, 2009, your Board approved a motion to request First 5 LA to consider an annual agreement of \$766,058 with DPH to provide one-time funding for the five community-based agencies to continue BIH services. Subsequently, on September 10, 2009, the First 5 LA Commission voted unanimously to award funding for the continuation of the BIH Program. An additional \$50,000 was approved by First 5 LA to increase the allocation for the BIH Program in the Antelope Valley where infant mortality amongst the African American population continues to rise at a high rate.

The First 5 LA funding will end June 30, 2010. As of now, First 5 LA has no plans to continue funding the BIH Program beyond the June 30, 2010. Moreover, the contract stipulates that no extension or additional funding shall be requested or granted despite the need for BIH services, the success of the program, or the fit with First 5 LA priority population.

The loss of First 5 LA funds on June 30, 2009 will eliminate DPH's ability to draw down the Title XIX federal matching dollars (\$358,229 for FY 2009-10). The loss of First 5 LA and Title XIX funding will mean a total reduction of \$1,174,287 for the BIH Program. For FY 2010-11, the only available funding to support future BIH services will be limited to Title V funds (\$575,713). This reduced funding will allow DPH to fund only one or two community-based agencies for the provision of countywide BIH services.

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In June 2009, the California Department of Public Health notified DPH that effective July 1, 2010, the current scope of BIH contracted services will be restructured. To support this new effort, DPH will release an RFP in March 2010 to select qualified community-based agencies that can implement new model. Upon completion, your Board will be notified of the RFP recommendations.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please let me know.

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c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors